/159 cont./

756 with a considerable portion of actual experience and knowledge.

The doctors are paid for their efforts.

There are also female doctors.

[648] I have observed no sign of hostility toward Whites among these people. They know how to evade observation, however, even better than the ordinary Bushman, and that says a good deal.

Only the doctor may eat a certain kind of poisonous snake, apparently the so-called black mamba, which I regard as an older type of cobra.

U. Totemism

771 I was unable to observe any indications that might lead one to deduce the existence of totemism.

V. Medicine

755 A man who was suffering from headache had colored his forehead with a black grease that supposedly had curative powers and had wound a thin thong firmly around his head. Our household remedy of firmly squeezing the sides of the aching head with both hands was familiar to the Auin.

278 752 The Bushman doctor makes an antidote from the black mamba, which he alone may eat. This antidote is supposed to help against the bites of all snakes, except that of the mamba itself.

He dries and pulverizes the lungs, gall, and liver, as well as the poisonous fangs with the poison glands. This powder is stirred into a paste with the fat of the same snake, and the paste, so I was informed, is rubbed into the enlarged wound, which has first been sucked out.

At the same time, various deep incisions are made on the upper arm and chest, from which considerable blood flows.

278 Poisons that work internally are not manufactured. The Auin maintain, however, that the arrow poison also works internally.

The manufacture of arrow poison was described above.

/159 cont./

278 752 [411] Poisoned arrows shot into the chest and abdomen are described as unconditionally deadly. Arrow wounds on extremities, as well as very superficial ones, are supposed to be curable under certain circumstances if immediate help is provided.

[751] There is no inoculation against arrow poison.

[827] An older Auin suffering from badly inflamed eyes attributed this illness to an arrow wound he had received many years earlier. His statement, of course, cannot be verified.

165 Malaria is endemic and annually exacts many lives. The number of cases resulting in death was especially great in 1908-1909. Whole settlements are supposed to have died out. Epidemics were unknown even to the "oldest people."

Venereal diseases are blessings of civilization, but evidently not yet widespread.

731 Famine actually prevails every year toward the end of the dry season, especially if the preceding rainy season has been poor. During this time, almost all the Auin are emaciated to skeletons. Death by hunger is not supposed to /160/ occur. After all, the Bushman always finds something to eat, even if it is only grass seeds.

756 The so-called doctors decidedly possess great experience in medical matters, which, however, does not prevent them from practicing considerable charlatanism (see Section T).

W. Time Reckoning, Astonomy

805 The day is divided according to the position of the sun.

Certain time segments are indicated with great exactitude according to the position of the sun. If one asks a Bushman, "How far is it to the watering place?" he will point to the place in the sky that the sun will have reached by the time one gets there.

The concept of the month is known (gnui, "month").

The relation of the solar year to lunar months is unknown.

The Auin divides up the year, for which, incidentally, he has no definite, but rather only a very vague concept, as follows:

[12 cont.]

000 439 occupation. Even among the nomadic groups, however, meat, hides, and so forth are commonly traded for millet.

[222] Also, the Blacks like to have veldkost on their table, and the Bushmen, like our sponge and berry gatherers, use their knowledge to supply them and carry on petty trade with their veldkost, as well as with honey.

222 137 This is the reason that veldkost, which is either scarce or not very tasty, is not gathered at all any more; indeed, the knowledge of its presence is even disappearing. We must also not forget that the black shepherd boys long ago acquired the knowledge of the Bushmen by observing them. As a result, the number of those interested has naturally climbed sharply, and the veldkost plants have become rare. The following kinds are still regularly gathered:

222 /airoba (ombimbo) Sweetish, very starchy tubers, like large potatoes.

/érui (omauungă) Galls on the leaves of the omsati tree.

≠gan-i (esarata) Small fruit.

!Khui-i (oombi) Dates.

!Korob-ke (oompali) Bulbs at the roots of a liana.

251 439 Dried meat is made from kudu flesh, which in part is kept and in part sold.

278 [13] Arrow poison is made from the sap of a tree (Euphorbiacea), !Khores-Ke. The Ondonga themselves make no [439] arrow poison, but buy it from the Bushmen for one to two sh per 752 portion. There is no medicine against arrow poison. Deep incisions are made at the place where the arrow entered, and after blood has flowed freely from the wound, it is sucked. In the case of snakebite the same procedure is followed, and some arrow poison is placed on the wound (!!!).

278 609 Our Bushmen denied any knowledge of poisons added to food. Only the "evil Bushmen" in the east had such knowledge, they claimed. This statement scarcely deserves credence.

177 In clothing, dwellings, and weapons, as well as ornaments, not much that is original remains. The process of Bantuization is much further advanced in the material culture than in the spiritual culture. It is, after all, easier to part with clothing than with ideas.

[43 cont.]

423 614 769 "The graves of the ancestors are within the kin group's territory. They are marked by the large piles of stone placed on them. The ancestors are regarded as the guardians of the kin group's territory. Hence, departure from the territory must be announced by the chief or an elder at the ancestral grave without special ceremonies; similarly, an announcement must be made there when the kin group again moves into the territory."

423 614 The property of the kin group, aside from its territory, includes the veldkost, the game, and, above all, the watering place.

13. Illnesses and Treatment

826 The anatomical knowledge of the Bushmen is quite extensive as a result of their way of life as hunters.

[761] The heart is regarded as the seat of life, and the breath has some connection with the heart. Their surgical knowledge is 752 757 confined to the extraction of thorns by means of an awl-like instrument and to the relatively effective bandaging of hand and leg 278 fractures. Their supply of medicines, on the other hand, is very limited. In what follows, I shall list the common illnesses and their treatment.

Eye Inflammation

752 Both dry and exudative eye inflammations, caused by sand and irritating grass seeds, are extremely widespread, and blear eyes are the rule among older people. These diseases, however, are not nearly as grave among the !Kung living in the forest as, say, among the Bushmen of the western Kalahari or among those [826] of Naukluft. Among the latter, blear eyes are even regarded as signs of beauty in young girls. Ordinary eye inflammations that pass in a short period of time mean nothing. They are treated by [753] rubbing with fat. If the ailment lasts for a longer period of time, then //Gauab [Fig. 16 appears here] certainly had something to [755] do with it; the doctor is called in and, after some treatment, produces a "little black medicine" from the eye.

!KUNG

[46 cont.]

Infectious Diseases

164 The Bushmen are plagued by the two most dangerous chronic infectious diseases, tuberculosis and malaria. Leprosy is absent.

Malaria appears every year during the rainy season. Bisob [757] roots are then thrown in the fire, and the smoke is inhaled. Small [278] children more commonly die of it. I did not see any cases of black water fever or malarial cachexia.

Tuberculosis is the common cause of death among the [165] Bushmen. I saw bone tuberculosis and swellings of the glands, as well as advanced cases of lung and throat tuberculosis. The poor people are helpless, and the frequent colds further the process in a dangerous fashion. As nomads living in small groups, they are generally spared the epidemics of the Whites and Blacks. Once an epidemic has made its appearance among them, however, they die in great numbers. It is interesting to note that the Bushmen are aware that contagious diseases exist. As such, however, they only know the above-mentioned skin disease (gari).

753 The other infectious general diseases are explained as an attack by many spirits of sickness upon the horde.

Assistance at Birth

844 When a young woman anticipates her first confinement, she remains near the huts because she is afraid. The older women cheer her up, and then a resting place is made of dried grass. The [845] woman gives birth in a squatting position. In case of difficulties during delivery, the lower part of the body is massaged. Medicine or manual assistance to expedite the delivery is not given. The umbilical cord is cut off with a quartz knife and buried.

[47] Wounds and Injuries

752 The most dangerous injury a Bushman can receive is through a poisoned arrow. The poisoned arrow is cut out, a piece of wood is held in the fire until it glows, and then it is used to

[47 cont.]

752 burn the wounded person at many places on his body. When the poison smells the warmth, it gathers at these places; incisions are then made there, and the blood is sucked out by means of a cupping glass made of gemsbok horn. The wounded person may neither sit nor lie down; he must be walked about for twenty-four hours. After this time he either dies or is cured. The method helps only in rare cases.

751 824 825 Snakebite is the second great danger. If one makes an incision in the lower part of the calf and rubs scrapings from a bisob root into it, the snakes smell this and do not come out of hiding. [Fig. 18 appears here.] When a person has to run great distances, bisob dust is mixed with fat and applied to the legs. In case someone is nevertheless bitten by a snake, the treatment is analogous to that used for arrow wounds. Injuries to the feet caused by thorns are very common. Injuries that pass through the aponeurosis are regarded as deadly. They practically always become infected. Even though wound infections take a less malignant and a slower course than among Europeans, they nonetheless sometimes lead to death. The only medicine used is bisob powder scattered in the wound.

752 (411) (278)

Fig. 18. Kirri of the !Kung.

756 751 Some doctors claimed to be immune to snake and scorpion bites.

What Vedder observed among the Bergdama is reported in a similar manner by Schinz:

"With the intention of testing the latter characteristic, I one day persuaded an old sorcerer visiting us in Noi !as on Ngami Lake to undertake an experiment with 12 scorpions (Buthus randus Simon) picked out by myself and having an average length of eight centimeters. In order to prevent any possibility of deception, I put the animals on the various parts of his body with tweezers, on the hands, legs, arms, mouth, and testicles. As a rule they then immediately and excitedly moved the long postabdomen back and forth and jabbed violently once or twice into the flesh of the guinea

[53 cont.]

821 rain comes down and the clouds extend over the whole world. The rain that has come down to earth does not stay there; the clouds again come forth from the earth. The rain obeys the great captain. In a storm the great captain knocks down the trees. If a person says something bad about him, however, punishment is not long in coming. X 'u says to the rain: "You must now go and kill him." And the rain goes and kills the man with lightning. But when the great captain says to the rain, "You must go now and punish him," then the lightning merely strikes the windscreen so that the whole thing collapses and the evildoer is thrown out. Then the people come running, rub the unconscious person with medicine, and burn his skin with red-hot pieces of wood until he comes to again.

776 821

[752]

Thus the angry great captain metes out punishment.

751 [782] 823 821 The Bushman concerned, however, is far from either privately or publicly begging the great captain for forgiveness. He is convinced that this would do no good. On the contrary, he puts his confidence in the following procedure: It is known that where lightning strikes quartz sand, so-called lightning tubes or fulgurites arise. This phenomenon has not remained hidden from the sharp eye of the Bushmen. My friends told me: There where lightning has struck one usually finds a stone called "rain tooth." The person brushed by lightning scratches his skin with this stone, [224] rubs in medicine which is supposed to bring luck in hunting, and [777] tries to hunt down a gemsbok. If he succeeds, he cooks the meat of the gemsbok with the rain tooth. If there is a second person in the horde who has previously been brushed by lightning, that person must eat the meat with him. Then medicine is made from this meat and other ingredients, and this is placed in the horn of a small bushbuck and carried around the neck by the person concerned.

751 821 When the "rain" comes again, he again goes to the hut of the person struck, walks through the fire where the buck was cooked, takes a bone of the buck (these bones remain lying on the spot), and goes with it into the nearest tree. The bone cooks in the tree, and the scum comes out on the side and the fat below. When the rain has passed, the bone is again pulled out and cooked with gemsbok horn and duiker horn and flesh; then it is

[63 cont.]

252 hot, the ashes and fire are taken out, the melons are placed in the hot soil, and the glowing ashes are thrown on them. The next morning the tsama are ready.

301 The largest ostrich egg beads are produced by the Masarwa.

532 Their dance masks are made with pods and cocoons, and
535 sometimes also small hide balls filled with little rattle stones.
323 They still know the art of pottery. White or red body painting is
302 customary.

304 A Bushman tribe at Ngami Lake is supposed to have the custom of removing the last joint of the little finger.

278 Dornan mentions the following medicines of the Masarwa: for black water fever, Anacampseros rhodesica; dysentery, Monsonia ovata and Euclea lanceolata. Other medicines: Cannabis sativa, Solanum nigrum, Lippia asperifolia, Crotalaria burkeana, Pterocarpus angolensis, Datura stramonium, Indigifera senegalensis, Bauhinia reticulata.

752 The Masarwa claim that they can only treat the bite of the puff adder. The body of the Lygosoma sundervalli is charred, and the powder is sprinkled into the wound. Every snake is killed, and
[751] its head crushed. Reportedly there are also inoculations against snakebite.

595 According to Dornan, monogamy prevails among the
836 Masarwa. Sexual intercourse before marriage is prohibited, and
684 incest and adultery are punishable by death. As a rule, the con-
584 sent of the girl is necessary for marriage; it is generally sufficient if the suitor presents his father-in-law with a head of big game. The hunting test is customary only among the Wankie Bushmen
582 and those of Bulalima. One may marry a girl from the same clan. Among those tribes that are totemistically influenced, one may
304 not marry a person of the same totem. Circumcision is practiced.
881 As soon as the boys and girls are about 12 years old, circumcision takes place, for which a stone knife is used. In the case of the girls, the clitoris is pierced with a stone point. Sexual intercourse
[836] between the uncircumcised is strictly prohibited. Occasionally the nasal septum is pierced at the boys' initiation. As among the
761 Bantu, every death is explained as sorcery by human enemies. In
764 olden times the dead were supposedly thrown into the bush;
178 nowadays they are sometimes buried in a crouching position in

AUIN
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NOGAU
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[76 cont.]

113

South African Journal of Science, Vol. 25, 1928.

J. Moir, J.S.A., Chemical Institute, VII, 1924, p. 28.

J. Moir and J. Lewis, J.S.A., Chemical Institute, VIII, 1925, p. 11.

H. H. Curson, Some Little-known South African Poisonous Plants and their Effects in Stock. Thesis for Diploma of F.R.C.V.S., 1926.

278 lives on the roots of an acacia. The Bushman carries several of these cocoons around with him, like cartridges, in an antelope horn. If the arrow tip is to be poisoned, a fire is made, some of the acacia resin that the Bushman always carries is smeared on the arrow tip, and then a cocoon is broken and its contents rubbed on the tip. On one occasion one of my Bushmen had overlooked a small wound on his thumb, through which the poison penetrated into his blood stream. The penetration of the poison was not very painful; he merely had a feeling "as though warm water was penetrating into his flesh." The arm was considerably [752] swollen for a week. The others made numerous incisions and scarifications with glowing sticks on him in order to save him. [262] The flesh of the animal killed in this way is eaten raw, poisonous.

278 Von François (2) reports that the Hei//om of this region

[112]

2. Von François, "Reiseberichte Windhuk-Gobabis [Travel Report, Windhoek-Gobabis]," Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten, V., 1892.

prepare their poison from the milky sap of the Apocynacea adenium Boehmianum. When exposed to the sun, it first becomes violet and then black. It is kept in little leather sacks and in case of need is warmed and mixed with the sap of the Habas root and applied to the arrow tips with flat sticks. These Bushmen still [411] used grooved stones to direct the arrow shaft.

/257 cont./

276 that has been cut off are very popular. The cut surface of the end of the horn is pressed to the mouth, and the smoke is sucked into the lungs in a deep draught. Very frequently simple cartridges are used as primitive, but nevertheless serviceable tobacco pipes.

[439] Clay pipes, which are not uncommon in the Kaukau Veld, are imported from the Betschuana.

415 /258/ A common kitchen utensil is a large, flat wooden spoon with a bent handle, which, however, is not used to place food in the mouth, but only to fill vessels. The Bushmen eat with

[241] their fingers; they drink their soups from the communal wooden bowl and polish up the rest with a crooked index finger and by licking it out with the tongue.

As pots they use pumpkin [melon?] vessels bound with leather

[482] thongs and carried over the shoulder on sticks.

As a special display object in many a hut one finds a large clay vessel with strong walls and decorated with white bands that

[439] have been notched into it. This vessel is imported from the Ovambo.

372 The tools for firemaking command special interest. The Bushman is acquainted with two, the dâni and the //oro.

The dâni (dâ = fire) consists of two wooden sticks, each about 40 centimeters long. The rounded-off end of the one stick fits into a pan-like cavity at the end of the other stick. The edge of the pan is provided with a little opening through which the glowing wood that has been rubbed to tinder can be emptied onto a smooth stone during the fire-twirling. The Bushman can make fire with this tool in less than half a minute.

The other firemaking device known to the Bushmen is the

[439] //oro, a flint with striking ring and tinder box, imported from the Betschuana.

412 A tool that in addition to its use in leather working also serves medical purposes is a pointed iron needle about 20 centimeters long and three millimeters thick, carried in a narrow leather sheath by almost every male Bushman. The needle is used with great skill

[752] for the removal of thorns from the skin, an operation which the Bushman naturally must frequently demand of his medicine man.

482 In addition to the above-mentioned hunting implements, the game snare and game hook, I was shown a wooden staff, approximately one and a half meters long and worked with some skill, which is used for carrying game over the shoulder,

Later, when the young boys had dispersed to play horse and rider, Ukwane took his bow and played a few songs. He played "Bitter Melons" again, and "A Song of Shouting," and one other song about Kutera, his wife. Both the last song and its subject were very simple, the song itself having only three or four notes and a gentle rhythm. It was composed by Ukwane one chilly night because he had asked Kutera to gather firewood during the afternoon, but she had refused. That night Ukwane had been cold because there was no fire.

Ukwane sang and played in the shade of a tree, and over his head the birds in the branches were also singing. Everything seemed very peaceful, very quiet under the hazy sky; the west wind moved the grass, yellow as young wheat, and blew the sounds of people speaking, the sounds of the young boys playing, and the fragrance of the great veld over us. The strain among the people seemed to have gone; they had held a dance together, their children were playing calmly; there was, for a time, enough to eat, as the gemsbok had not yet been quite devoured; and all these things seemed to relax the people, allowing them to see each other in more favorable lights. Their naps and their soft singing showed their relaxation, and we were glad, for we had become so fond of Ukwane and his people that we did not like to think of them abandoned by the Okwa people or involved in strife.

We were loading our trucks because we planned to leave before dawn. At the end of the afternoon all the Bushmen had drifted into our camp to watch us, and Tsetchwe helped me pack. I cut my finger on the sharp edge of a box and when she saw me trying to wipe the blood away she told me to wait, so I did, and when the blood was dry she scratched it all off with a stick.

We gave her presents, and presents to all the people there. We gave blankets to the people in Ukwane's band, long strings of white beads to everyone, metal to makes knives or

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
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Kung

tree, and, looking inside it, found that it was filled with rain water. They told the rest of us, who went to get a drink. It was just a dead and blasted tree full of murky water, but, standing in front of it, Lazy Kwi began to fumble in his hunting-bag for his drinking-straw. He slipped the straw into a crack in the bark, drank, and held the straw for the next person. The straw was a reed with a hollow center and very hard to drink from, I found when my turn came to take a sip, for it was badly cracked. It was all one could do to suck hard enough to moisten one's tongue, the water was stagnant, and the reed tasted strongly of the inside of Lazy Kwi's hunting-bag, but everyone drank, and when they had enough they returned to the fire. Something must have reminded Lazy Kwi of the European farmers on the way, for he announced naïvely: "They did not give me a shirt to put on my body."

When the fire was burning well the two men went to the bee tree. It too was dead, taller than the others in the forest and quite conspicuous. Lazi Kwi knocked on it with his ax and it gave forth a hollow sound. Then Lazy Kwi picked a straw and poked it into a tiny hole in the wood, and when he withdrew it there was honey on it and two bees. One bee detached itself and stung Lazy Kwi on the ribs and Lazy Kwi shook his skin like a dog. His father-in-law came forward with a smoking branch and held this near the hole. He blew smoke inside and the bees began to moan, low and ominously, the moan mounting in volume as Lazy Kwi chopped a piece from the tree above the hive. Four or five bees flew out of their hole; one flew at me and stung my face. The sting felt like a blow and in a moment the side of my face was numb and swollen. Lazy Kwi saw what had happened and he scratched the sting out with his fingernail. The old man by now had chopped away a large section of the tree and the bees poured down from the opening like water from a tap, but

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buffalo, not hearing them, would relax, lie down, and itself get stiff and sore. In the morning the two men had found where the buffalo had slept, also a damp spot of its urine with black flecks in it (which I believe were flecks of blood) and Toma had pushed a poison arrow into the spot of urine so that the buffalo would be unable to urinate again, unable to rid itself of more poison.

The men had followed the buffalo's track for three days, knowing from its footprints that it was getting weaker, staggering, and in the morning of the fourth day they had come over a rise of ground and had seen it far ahead of them, lying on its side as if dead. The two men wisely had not gone up to it, but had squatted where they were to watch it, remaining this way for most of the day, and when the buffalo had not even flicked its tail or heaved its sides in breathing, Toma had considered it safe enough to approach. He had done this cautiously, very carefully, balancing his long spear in his hand, but just as Toma had stood near the buffalo, spear poised for the stab that would kill it surely, the buffalo had lurched to its feet, had chased Toma, and had tossed him on its horns.

The great boss, the heavy mass of horn on the buffalo's forehead, had cracked Toma's ribs and one curved horn had hooked in Toma's side, passing through his body and out his back. Toma had lain unconscious and Lazy Kwi had carried him home; later, other hunters of Toma's band had found the buffalo truly dead, partly eaten by vultures, and had taken the meat; but nothing, no medicines or cures that the Bushmen had used, had helped Toma, and the people had expected him to die.

Gautscha was the country of Toma's wife, and when Toma had realized how sick he was he had wanted to return to his own people, the people of Gam. Lazy Kwi and another man

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had carried him there and it was there that the second group of farmers had found him, unable to escape or to resist, and they had taken him away. His wife was still waiting at Gautscha and Lazy Kwi had returned there to tell her that her husband had gone.

At the farm, though, Toma's luck had begun to turn. The farmer had gradually managed to heal his wounds with medicine and treatment, and by the start of the dry season Toma had felt quite well. One night, when the veld was quiet and dark, Toma had thanked the farmer in his heart, had gathered all the Bushmen on the farm together, and had led the people over the veld, all the way back to Nyae Nyae. It had been a long walk, a long way, but Toma had managed. Now, said Lazy Kwi, Toma's wound ached on cold days and sometimes his vision was blurry, but he was pleased with himself and pleased to be back in his own country.

Lazy Kwi was pleased with him too, and he smiled when he finished the story.

When the first light of morning came, the air was so cold that our breath made clouds. We got up, fed the fire, and cooked the remainder of last night's meat, then drove off in the jeep again, for in that early light we had seen the smoke of three veld fires on the horizon, one in the south, two in the west, perhaps kindled by Bushmen during the night, perhaps revived by the wind from old embers, and we planned to make a circle to investigate them all.

On the way we found a bee tree that had been raided for its honey and we believed that Toma had done it, although the break was old and the bees were gone away; but after looking at it a moment Lazy Kwi remembered that he had done it himself during the last rains. He remembered too that there had been very little honey and that he had got stung, and

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FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

621 tance, but Toma said now that he would take us to see them someday soon because he believed that we would be able to help them; one man in their band, a man called Short Kwi, or sometimes Kwi the Hunter, had been bitten in the leg by a puff adder and was very badly hurt. We got the impression
159 that he had been bitten recently and, hoping that we might
621 draw the poison from the wound, we said that we would leave
752 at once. But Toma said that it had happened during the last rainy season, so there was no use hurrying; other Bushmen had cut the wound and had sucked the poison, saving Short Kwi's life, but his leg was so badly hurt that he couldn't use it. It had turned black, said Toma, and black liquid ran out at the wound. We thought then that there would be nothing we could do to help; but perhaps rumor had exaggerated the misfortune, and so we told Toma that we would certainly go to do what we could.

224 Short Kwi came from a famous family; he was the younger
159 brother of the man who murdered Toma's father, but Short Kwi was famous in his own right, famous as a hunter. He often killed more game in a year than many other men kill in their lives, a great hunter among a hunting people. The other Bushmen told stories about him—about the time he had killed four wildebeests in a herd of many, about the time he had killed an eland, a wildebeest, and a wild pig all in one day. It was his technique of hunting to be relentless in his pursuit; therefore, if he shot an animal and suspected others to be in the vicinity he would let the wounded animal run where it would while he hunted on and shot another, and another, and when all were as good as dead he would rest, then return to pick up the trail of the one that he felt would die the soonest. He almost never lost an animal, for his eyes
[151] were sharp and he could follow a cold trail over hard ground and even over stones; he could tell from fallen leaves whether

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from the foreheads of the antelope they kill and fashion them into bracelets which their wives wear on their arms. Short Kwi's wife and daughter wore dozens of these; their arms were covered and heavy with them. Short Kwi himself wore no ornament of any kind, nothing except a crown of badger hair which he owned for a while but later gave to Toma, the very crown that Toma's son now wore.

One day, said Toma, Short Kwi had been walking in the veld and had failed to watch where he was going. He had stepped on the tail of a puff adder, which had risen up and bitten his leg, just below the knee. It was a rare and terrible accident; in all the time we had been in the Kalahari we had known of only two people besides Short Kwi who had been harmed by snakes—a young boy bitten by a mamba who had died the day he was bitten, and a young woman who had been pulled into a waterhole by a water python and had drowned. Usually, snakes move away when you come near them, or if they don't, you can usually see them; but you can't walk with your eyes on the ground all the time, especially if you are hunting, as Short Kwi had been. His misfortune was regarded as a horrible accident and it was felt that the spirits of the dead were to blame. They had led Short Kwi down the very path the puff adder had chosen, and perhaps had even placed the snake where his foot was sure to fall. Toma and Goa Feet were very depressed to think of it. Although the talk turned to other things, Gao Feet mentioned the accident again and again; everything seemed to remind him of it. At last Toma said to us: "Perhaps you can help him hunt again. Since he was bitten his people have had no meat."

Toma told us that he had been with Short Kwi near Nama Pan when the third group of white farmers had arrived. The farmers had looked at Short Kwi and had offered to cut his leg off for him then and there. This had frightened the Bush-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

164 Short Kwi's wife, who looked around at them all gravely, listening, and when they had finished she nodded her head. "A medicine man of Europeans," they said.

"So," said she.

We talked about the foot for a while, for although he had covered it we could still see the toes. The people of the werf described how Short Kwi was bitten and everyone claimed credit for his part in saving Short Kwi's life. One man had killed the snake, another had cut the fang punctures, and others had given advice at the time and later. The leg had [753] swelled enormously and the medicine men had cut the swollen skin to let blood; the scars of this still showed on the healthy thigh above the blanket. All the people seemed very depressed when talking about it, though; for one reason, they ate meat less often, but also they truly admired him and did not seem to enjoy watching the disaster. Toma asked Short Kwi how he felt and Short Kwi said he thought that his leg had seemed to be getting a little better during the last few days.

582 It was almost evening, and we heard voices singing in the veld. Two women and a young girl were coming home from a trip for veld food. These three were also very happy to see us and the little girl kissed me but not the men, then asked for her mother, who lived at Nama and whom she had not seen for seasons, and we told her that her mother was well. The girl had been newly married and she was as pretty as she could be, with lots of beads, and with long ornaments of tsi nuts hanging beside her face. She wore a fine kaross which she had rubbed with red powder, often a sign to men that a [291 822 224 841] girl is menstruating, as perhaps she was, that men may be careful not to touch her and endanger their powers to hunt. 784 Marriage seemed to have agreed with her. She looked very

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the point, for the slightest prick, the least bit of poison getting in such a wound, would cause death.

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Depending on where the poisoned arrow hits, a small buck can die in a morning, a man in a few hours, a giraffe in four to five days. There is nothing that can be done for a man, short of amputating a limb or immediately excising the wound and cutting the nearby flesh to let the blood drain. Yet, the poison has no effect upon the game's meat. One can even eat the mixture with relative impunity: it must enter the bloodstream directly to be deadly.

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As subsistence activities, the men's and women's roles—hunting and gathering—are of unequal weight. Almost eighty per cent of the people's food is *veldkos*, more abundant than game in *Nyae Nyae*, and far more easily acquired. If from one summer to the next, a man kills twelve antelope, he feels he has had a good year.

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But, despite its relatively minor subsistence value, hunting is extremely important in !Kung culture. It has developed its body of technology, acquired a large tradition of beliefs, fostered a wealth of knowledge, and

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
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Treatment

is administered by relatives or friends, or in cases of acute and prolonged illness by a magician well versed in medical practices, who is paid for his services. In cases of the latter kind a very common method employed is massage, leading up to the extraction of foreign bodies (" disease-poisons ", " spirits of disease ", etc.) believed to have been introduced into the patient and thus causing his illness. When the " doctor " feels that the foreign body has been brought near enough to the surface by his treatment, he sucks the part affected and then, with a retching sound, triumphantly spits out the object he is supposed to have sucked from the patient's body. Stones, pieces of bark, small bones, etc., are thus extracted from the affected part of the patient, who in consequence is cured![1] Lebzelter records also that, while the " doctor " is busy performing this cure, the relatives and friends standing round pray to the " supreme being " to make the patient well again; and, as we have seen, the use of prayers in case of severe illness is mentioned by several other writers as well.[2]

More practical forms of treatment are also found, however.[3] Herbs and roots of various kinds are extensively employed as medicines. Sometimes they are burned to ashes which are then rubbed into small cuts made in the patient's body, sometimes they are boiled and given as a decoction. How far they actually do have curative effects is difficult to say, as no special study appears to have been made of their pharmacological properties, nor, save in a few instances, have they even been identified. But Dornan mentions that " for blackwater they use a plant called qilika (*Anacoampseros rhodesica*) by the Matabele; dysentery *Monsonia ovata*, and *Euclea lanceolata*; for various other diseases, *Cannabis sativa*, *Solanum nigrum*, *Lippia asperifolia* (malaria), *Cratalaria burkeana*, *Pterocarpus angolensis*, *Datura stramonium*, *Indigofera senegalensis*, and *Bauhinea reticulata*".[4] Burns, open sores, headaches, etc., are treated by rubbing medicated ointments on the part affected. Chapman describes another method of treatment undergone by himself. " Having a frightful headache from the heat of the sun, I resort to my usual Bushman remedy, at the expense of having my forehead ornamented with blisters dotted all over it the next morning. April [his Bushman guide] has a root

[1] A good eyewitness account of this treatment is given by Schinz, *Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika*, 340–1; cf. also D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 29.
[2] " Religiösen Vorstellungen usw.," 411; cf. pp. 183 sq. above.
[3] Nolte, " Krankheiten und Heilmittel der Nama und Buschmänner," *D. Kol.-Ztg.*, 1886, p. 629 sq.; Chapman, *Travels in S. Africa*, i, 159, 282–3; ii, 74, 182; Kaufmann, loc. cit.; Dornan, loc. cit.; Vedder, " Grammatik der !Kû-Buschmannsprache," 8–9; Fourie, loc. cit.
[4] Op. cit., 142.

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752 which he puts into the fire, and brands me all over the forehead, heating it again and again. It is the heat of the fire that gives the relief, not the root, nor any of his genuflexions over me."[1] Surgical practice seems to be limited to incisions made in the skin, but Vedder notes that cupping is also employed among the Kung. Incisions are made in the patient's skin and covered with the horn of an animal, through which the blood is then sucked out.[2]

278 752 [114] The existence of specific antidotes for arrow poisoning is reported by several of the older writers, but their statements lack confirmation. The effects of such a wound, as far as can be ascertained, are almost invariably fatal.[3] The Naron also have no antidote for snake poison, the effects of which they try to counteract by tying the snake skin round the bite. Kaufmann, however, records that among the Auen the magician makes out of the black mamba, which he alone may eat, an antidote supposed to act against all snake bites except that of the mamba itself. He dries and powders the lungs, gall, and liver, as well as the poison in the fangs, and mixes this powder with the fat of the snake. The salve thus made is rubbed into the wound, which is first sucked out. At the same time several deep cuts are made in the upper arm, from which blood is allowed to stream freely.[4] There is nothing [114] in Kaufmann's account to indicate whether this information is based on personal observation or merely upon hearsay, so that it must be received with caution. Chapman, a careful observer whose hunting expeditions brought him into frequent close contact with the Bushmen in the North-West Kalahari, describes another form of antidote with which he himself saw the Bushmen cure themselves of snake bite. This is a creeping tendrilous plant, called "eokam" by the Bushmen, but unfortunately not identified by him. About eight or ten of its seeds, either eaten or taken as a decoction, act as an emetic. The dose is repeated about three times, when the patient is cured. "They also tattoo and scarify their bodies, and make an incision near the wound, which they suck with some of the root, chewed, in their mouths. This is evidently to prevent the poison acting upon the gums in case of bleeding. The sucking out of the poison is not necessary, but is done by way of precaution. Bushmen having a bit of this root on their necks laugh at snake-bites."[5]

751 Other writers mention that "doctors" sometimes render themselves

[1] Op. cit., ii, 182. [2] Loc. cit.
[3] The question is discussed by Schapera, "Bushman Arrow Poisons," 212–13.
[4] D. F. Bleek, op. cit., 19; Kaufmann, op. cit., 159. [5] Op. cit., ii, 74.